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The Near Future

By
Michael Brownstein

In 1800 in all the world
there were one billion people
in 1950, two billion
now there's six billion
ten billion people by the year 2025
exploding, spurting, surging
tidal wave, earthquake, blink of an eye
how many is too many?
what will the word "human" mean
in 2025, not that far away, really
when everybody will be in possession
of one little room the size of their heads
dreaming revelatory dreams
of the world filled with billions of humans
in the year 1800, the year 1950
the years 2025, 2250, 3137, 483632
wherever "now" went
whoever's "here" now
scratching our heads, trying
to make sense of our success

Because for humans it turns out
winning also means losing
losing folkways, losing space, losing the unknown
whoever's "alive" now, whatever "dead" means
as you turn to me and insist
"I've got a grip on things now"
but actually the grip's on you
population density altering identity
warping thought patterns, pasteurizing
consciousness
turning us inside out and upside down
making us forget that every moment in history
is flush with prehistory, is full of acid flashbacks
of us dropping down out of the trees
sniffing the air, our feet planted on the ground
loving the sights, the sounds of earthly life
then someone builds a fire and we all gather round
looking each other in the eye
embracing every last person in the circle
big smiles on our faces
for a hundred thousand years

But today the tables have turned
critical mass, demographic flash point
what human means suddenly uncertain
irradiated, plastic-saturated, genetically modified
people spilling over the rim
uncountable as microbes
especially when you factor in
our multiple, shifting personalities
our vast entourage of memories and demons
and our self-images ain't working too good
anymore, even though we're afraid to drop
the dead hand of ownership—
greedy, competitive, property-worshipping
suspicious, conspiratorial, anti-feminine
feeling up the planet for the hell of it
Private property has got to go
monogamy, the work ethic, clock time
billionaire fortunes, destitution, nationalism
our only option, surrender
surrender to relationships open to the breeze
no more me owning you, you owning me
until we float away from our armored selves
like deep sea divers releasing their harpoons
mental nomads erasing the space
between here and there, between now and then
between you and me
otherwise we'll keep hardening and shrinking
all ten billion of us, all 30 billion, 50 billion

Because the age of smallness is fast approaching
nothing but a little room inside our heads
with a few houseplants that stand for the jungle
dusty terrariums we'll think of as the wilderness
while we christen a puddle under the kitchen sink
the Great Salt Lake—
look, see the bonsai trees on the mall?
see the tiny automobiles driving around
down there below the matchstick bridge?
wherever they go, they always arrive
they never get lost, there's no way to get lost
everyone's options screwed on tight
people jammed against the walls, dangling
from the rafters
lining the hallways of each other's dreams

But still there's a voice we can hear
calling to us from deep inside our bones
it says that smallness is not our fate
the next big flash point coming right up
in fact, it's in the near future
when the density of our existence erupts
bursting open what we see and feel
breakthrough into resonance, just like in prehistory
and the trees on the hillsides watching our game
are beside themselves with joy
they've waited for so long, waited for this moment
when marauding humans finally come home
and think the way plants and animals
have always thought, every life form on Earth
forever dissolving the distance
between here and there, between now and then
between you and me

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VETIVER
THING OF THE PAST
LP/CD/DOWNLOAD



Two years after the highly acclaimed *To Find Me Gone*, Andy Cabic and Vetiver return with a new album of old songs, all hidden treasures, entitled *Thing of the Past*. Think of it as Cabic's fully realized mix tape to the world—a collection of some of his favorite songs from some of his favorite records—but presented, sequenced, and in this case performed by Cabic himself, with a little help from his friends far and wide.

Featuring core Vetiver members: Cabic (vocals/guitar/banjo), Brent Dunn (bass), Sanders Trippie (guitar/vocals), Otto Hauser (drums/keyboards) and Kevin Barker (guitar/banjo/vocals), *Thing of the Past* also includes contributions from two of Cabic's heroes, Vashti Bunyan (who duets on "Sleep A Million Years") and Michael Hurley (who does likewise on his own "Blue Driver").

Includes covers of songs originally performed by Elyse Weinberg, Ronnie Lane & Slim Chance, Kathy Heideman, Norman Greenbaum, Biff Rose, Ian Matthews, Garland Jeffreys, Hawkwind, Loudon Wainwright III, Michael Hurley, Townes Van Zandt, and Bobby Charles.

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I SEE HAWKS IN L.A.
HALLOWED GROUND

folk country weeping steel ancient fiddles high lonesome vox telecaster baritone
Topanga ferns fossils three masted schooner murder ballad Yukon
repo Great Barrier Reef she handed a tab to me

old timey banjo accordion
bedpandolion love of wife and life kings of the Central Valley
farmer's markets weeds trees Johnny Appleseed harmonies if you please



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SUDEN BO GEME

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BULL
TONGUE

By Byron Coley
and Thurston Moore

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This new **Little Claw 7"** on the **Physical Sewer** label which they had on their last roadtrip doesn't even sound like them. But what do they sound like anyway? They sounded like the greatest goddamned fucking band on the planet the time we saw 'em. Two minimalist drummers, a guitar dude with a nice underhook rhythm rip and a girl with a badass no wave slather tongue tearing hell out of her slide guitar given half the chance. And not all hellbent rage either—some nice licorice melt drizzle crud groove too. Fuckin' awesome. This 7" sounds amazing but like some other weirdness was at play in the living room or wherever this beautiful session went down. Yr fucking nuts not to locate this—try their myspace roost.

Although the material is clearly posed, the new **Richard Kern** book, **Looker (Abrams)**, is as voyeuristic as **Gerard Malanga's** classic **Scopophilia** and **Autobiography of a Sex Thief**. Kern's volume combines a feel of chasing a subject and photographing her without her knowledge, with some purely 21st Century tropes (dig the upskirt end papers), but the feel seems to also be a tribute to the '70s Penthouse mag vibe. The nudes and font and the introductory essay by Geoff Nicholson all combine to create a volume with a much more gentle charge than Kern's last book, **Action**. On the virtual opposite end of the photographic spectrum is **David B. McKay's Yuba Seasons (Mountain Images Press)**, which has some of the best nature photography we've seen in a long time. McKay has spent 40 years photographing this Northern

California river and the area around it, and he has captured something really mind-blowing about the interaction of water and light and stone. The land-scapes are great, but the river shots are beautiful, mysterious, fast and deep. You can feel them as much as you see them. Really fine.

There's been a whole ark-full of gospel comps the last few decades and Lord yes they are always welcome but just when you think the well is dryin' up along comes this motherfucker of a manic backwoods backstreet romper **Life Is A Problem (Mississippi Records)**. It's been out a while and is even in a 2nd pressing (w/out the 1st pressing's bonus 7") and is compiled by Eric and Warren from the Mississippi record store and label in Portland, OR and Mike McGonigal, who also annotated. It's a 14-song set with some really raw guitar blow outs, handclap n' chant fever stomps and sweet as 'Bama honey singing. Some names on here we know like the lap-steel slasher **Reverend Lonnie Farris** but there are some straight up surprises. Particularly "Rock & Roll Sermon" by **Elder Charles Beck**, where he rails against the devil's music, all the while kicking rock n roll ass. More sanctified sounds promised from this label in the future. Before this LP they issued a comp called **I Don't Feel at Home in this World Anymore 1927-1948** which is also sheer beauty digging into tracks released by immigrants to America delivering early Zydeco, Salsa, Hawaiian slack key, etc.

One usually thinks of the **Roaratorio label** as one devoted to somewhat experimental or avant sput,

but their newest LP is the eponymous vinyl debut by Knife World. And this is rock in a mode that reminds us of classic-era oddball indie stuff of the SST/Homestead era (Phantom Tollbooth crossed with Trotsky Icepick, maybe?). The vocals are a little annoying, but the playing is defiantly expert and filled with non-generic psych moves and references. Not sure what their story is, but building the 3D glasses in the record's label is a neat trick. For a turtle. Less turtle more tortoise is the newish eponymous LP by **Jack Rose (Tequila Sunrise)**. This is a shimmering gladhand through steel guitar luxuriation the bluestiest post-Fahey mode imaginable. Just

left:
Little Claw's
latest release

when you think Jack has hit the top, he creases you again. There's also a new 2CD set, pairing this and the excellent **Doctor Ragtime and His Pals**, which is a functional combo effort with Glenn Jones, Mike Gangloff and others, trading trad like the actual rubes they are not. Very swift.

Steve Reid has long been one of the more interesting of modern American jazz drummers. Usually considered in an avant garde perspective that can hardly contain his history, as the dude started out in the '50s playing with Martha & the Vandellas and then in the Apollo Theater house band with Quincy Jones. Sometime in the '60s he went to Africa and played with Fela Kuti and others. Bringing it back home he played with all kinds of cats from Archie Shepp to Miles Davis to Sun Ra and Charles Tyler and ran his own label, Mustevic. The last few years he's been releasing CDs with electronics improviser **Kieran Hebden** who is a founder of Four Tet. Inspired by both men's love for the *Duo Exchange* LP by Rashid Ali and Frank Lowe from the early '70s, the two discs so far issued are **The Exchange Session Vols. 1 + 2 (Domino)**. They are amazing and eloquent in how they deal with open ended forward moving sophisticated improv playing. Hebden's spiritual take on the nature of his electronic sounds is captivating. His palette is righteous, moving from computer generated sounds to winding toy music boxes over electric guitar pick-ups. It's all live, no overdubs, no edits. A new CD of what looks like the duo's take on compositions (some standards—"Greensleeves")! is out but we have yet to make the grip.

Substantials #03 (CCA Kitkyushu) is the latest in the great series of books and CDs documenting a Japanese lecture/sound workshop series. This one features bilingual text from **Keiji Haino, Dickson Dee, William Bennett, Russell Haswell** and **Toshiji Mikawa**, with a CD track by each. Cool. Also CD-enriched is the new issue of George Parsons'

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this column, top:
Karla Borecky
bottom:
Scott Foust
center column, top:
Jessica Rylan (Can't)
bottom:
Jessie Leigh Swenson
far right column:
Windy Weber's I Hate People



song is the **Losing New Friends Every Day** LP by **Gay Tastee** and **Ziamaluch** on **Myth of Creation**. Recorded in '98, this is a very boss acoustic Albany session mixing Ziamaluch's cello and Gay's guitar and vocals (which wiggle into our ears in a way that keeps making us think of some period of Peter Stampfel's we haven't heard yet). Simple as a shoelace, but better. Even stranger is the eponymous solo album by **Tom Thayer (Cardboard Mirror)**. Recorded over several years, when he was still teaching in Tennessee, this album is a sonic journey that rewards repeated listenings. At first, it sounds like a fairly random pile of semi-songs, found-sounds and loops, but as you play it more, it starts to create its own dastardly dream narrative, and makes a woggily passage into and out of yr head, like a Van Dyke Parks thimble-robot with evil intentions.

Most amazing art book this time has to be the universal vastness and bounty of the two volume **Gary Panter** set from **Picturebox**. Panter is one of our generation's great artists, and this set—one sketchbook, one fantastic monograph with essays and chunks of his entire oeuvre, will be the best gift book of the still-far-off-enough-to-plan-for-it Christmas season. Unbelievably great. Same is true for the (can it really be the first?) overview of the career of one of Panter's heroes—Jack Kirby. **Kirby: King of Comics (Abrams)** is a lush and luscious peek at the guy who invented Marvel's aesthetic, then went on to pen the berserk New Gods series, which psychedelized every feeble brain it touched. Yikes. On a semi-related note, we also recently stumbled across a remainder called **High Art** by **Ted Owen (Sanctuary Publishing)**, which is a very good collection of (mostly) poster art from the psychedelic era onwards. Nice paper, good repros. Handy!

For those of us who spend all day trolling for the next insanely killer black metal obscurity it's hard to focus on reviewing records by the non-satanic. So it was with nefarious glee to come across the **I Hate People** CD by **Windy Weber**.

You may know Windy from her years as part of the engaging beautiful bliss music duo **Windy & Carl** out of Michigan. Who woulda thought

this woman with the calming tones of serenity was once an angry goth-punk teen? Sorta makes sense—there was always a haunted sense in that serenity. But nothing prepared us for this solo recording. It's totally dark and personal and not so much forlorn as just wanting to be alone, away from...people. Dark clouds of layered guitars and disenchanting vocal blackness stare blankly out of a sleeping bag of emotional frustration. An uncomfortable listen, though hardly as grating as all the sick black metal scumming out our power-books, but in a welcome sense, more real. The CD is released on **Blueflea** and the LP on **Kenedik** with 500 copies on splattered blood red vinyl.

And on the subject of beautiful darkness, a fantastic and startling depressed art-musique LP has been issued by **Idea Fire Company**. **The Island of Taste (Swill Radio)** is probably the most galvanized manifesto yet from the philosophical freneticism of New England's most dapper noise artist, **Scott Foust**, and the remarkable painter/sound goddess, **Karla Borecky** (whose paintings grace the cover within and without). Probably not a good idea to get involved here with Scott's history of pronounced ideology, all of which has measures of pure and wicked fascination. But suffice it to say it really does add some delirium to the listening experience. He's got some great lines on one of the enclosed art cards with this LP such as "I think of my work as a time bomb set for a mythical future. I would like to see it explode during my lifetime, but if that does not obtain, I will die knowing it is still there. Ticking." For all you noise bugs and avant-garde creepsters let it be known this extremely fine grip of New England deep winter mesmer has within its execution the participation of **Frans de Ward, Graham Lambkin, Richard Rupenus, Meara O'Reilly** and **Jessi Leigh Swenson**. Yum.

It's kind of odd to think that **John Lurie** hasn't had a good overview of his visual work until **A Fine Example of Art (Power House Books)**. The paintings in here are all pretty recent, but John was known as an artist before we ever heard of him as a saxophonist or film maker or actor or composer or TV star or anything else. Whether this was just an impression or actual knowledge is hard to recall, but the paintings in this book are fucking hilarious and rough and very very right. The Glenn O'Brien essay is good, as are the small testimonials at the end. Lurie—as much as we may have envied his fashion sense back in the day—is a real polymath. Better than Ben Vereen? We say, yes. In the *Is It Book? Or CD?* Category, winner this time is **Nurse with Wound's Image/Zero Mix** box from **Beta Lactam Ring**. This combines a CD of the pre-remix version of the *Angry Electric Finger* material (some of it, Xhol Caravan messed-with to great effect by Stapleton), plus a solid new, dark-prog album called *Requital for Lady Day*, and a book collecting the 100 painted LPs that Steve created for



above:
Davey Crockett, 2004, watercolor on paper, by **John Lurie**

an art project revolving around *Angry E*. It couldn't sound or look better.

We reviewed a cassette by **The Grand Hotel** long time ago. It was weird and really out of nowhere and we figured whoever these magicians were, they probably would evaporate sooner rather than later as such monumentalists are wont to do. Seems like they've been kinda alive and well and giggling close by our environs once or twice. Who are they? We kinda pride ourselves on knowing when shit is going down at any given time in any given basement but The Grand Hotel has us kinda sniffing sideways in "huh?" Adding to our delightful bafflement is a goddamned LP in an edition of a goddamned 100 copies with goddamned silkscreen covers and purportedly recorded in Lake Tahoe, Palo Alto, Hopewell Junction and New Orleans. Either someone's pulling our dick or we're just too bizzzy doin' jus' dat ourselves cuz this **The Sailboat Mix LP (felt records)** is as enchanting and unpretentious and sweet a slab of huzz-grind improv slather yr likely to grip any which way. What the fuck?

Got a very interesting batch of small comic books by Englishman **Malcolm Duff**, who is a pal of the great **Chris Corsano**. Malcolm has apparently done over 30 solo books, so he only sent a smattering, but they're choice. **A 52 Second Silence for Topsy** shows how to deconstruct an elephant in less than a minute. **The Banana/Skin Joke** is like a Peter Bagge movie for

heads. **The Blackest Gnome** explains the real death of vaudeville. **I Can't Swim Part 1** is a dense allegory about disabled athletes and the brothers who loved them. **I Can't Draw Part 2** is a concept piece about the idiocy of certain members of the teaching profession. **A Lone Stiff** is one of the least explicit sex comics I've ever seen. Judging from this stash, Mr. Duff has an offconsistent aesthetic and a concept-driven style that relies at least as much on theory as content. We dig it. And so may you. Also worth checking out is **Metronome** by **Veronique Tanaka** (NBM). A text-free graphic novel, *Metronome* tells the story of an affair in a fairly brilliant way. Each page is composed of 16 squares, and they depict different parts of the story in non-sequential fragments, all of which eventually cohere into a single story. It's very well done and a really cool construction art project.

Two completely fucking amazing LPs have come our way via Philadelphia label **Fedora Corpse**. First up is **Göte**, the brother/sister or man/wife or something/something duo of Adam and Jennifer Melinn who not only go way beyond their previous outputs of free-metal zone-mulch with a red vinyl vision-dump of brain-gnarl heaviness but are the masterminds behind the Fedora Corpse machine. As excellent is the self-titled blue vinyl **Comoros** LP where some mysterious maniacs exhibit a swoozy command of daydreamed drool-tone with blackmetal mantra

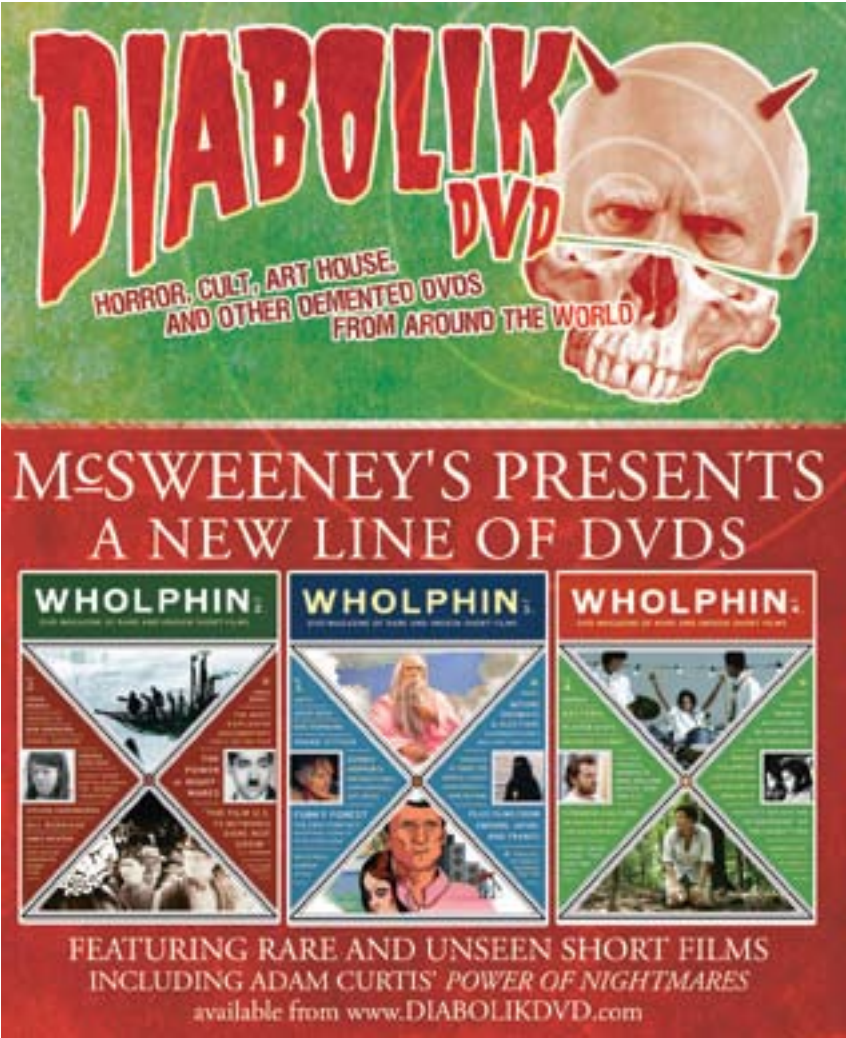


always boss *Dream* magazine. Number 8 has the usual collection of inter-views with contemporos (Dredd Foole, Charalambides, Reefus Moons, Anla Couris, etc.) and historical figures (Powell St. John, Absalom...), along with a jillion well-written/well-argued reviews. One of the highlights of each year. Also worth straining eyes over is **A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music** by **George Lewis (University of Chicago Press)**. We can't lie and say we've done anything except skim it this far (c'mon, it's almost 700 pages!!!), but it appears to be a very thorough examination of the Chicago-based arts collective by Lewis, who joined in '71. Does not seem to have a really thorough sessionography, but there's still plenty to read.

Need to give some props to the UK label **Sunbeam**, who have been doing vinyl on their releases lately. We dunno if they do 'em all or what, but the 2LP version of **J.J. Light's Heya**—the all-time classic of Native America raunch-pop, as viewed through the lenses of Bob Markley & Kim Fowley. Really a sweet package. As is the latest **Sublime Frequencies** LP, **The Shadow Music of Thailand**, which documents a pocket universe of probably related '60s Thai bands who contemporized traditional Siamese themes under the influence of Brit instrumental groups

like the Shadows. It's a wild blend. Not sure what the hell to make of the three new LPs on (graphic genius) **Dennis Tyfus's Ultra Eczema** label. **Jos Steen's Electricity!!! Music for Tape and Turntable** finds this crazy Belgian blues bozo doing extremely crotchety experimental stuff with almost no Beefy vocal yowlage (which has long seemed his stock-in-trade). Pretty amazing in a very crude way. Asis **Eric Thielemans's A Snare Is a Bell**, which is a one-sided document of a very compact and continuous rasp-drone of a solo percussion concert. **0032 (0)3 2934834** by Tyfus himself, is a collection of crank phonecalls, in some fucking language, recorded during 2007 for an art exhibition. Funny in a very strange way. Dennis has a great old man voice.

A quite bizarro LP has spuzzed its way to us from a couple of cats who used to be part of sick westcoast psycho jammers **Residual Echoes**. **Dave Novick and Jerry Encoe** perform as a duo called **San Francisco Water Cooler** and their debut LP on **KDVS Recordings** is a son of a bitch miasma of boogie fried cosmo skree. The boys live in the old gold rush burg of Fiddletown, California and sounds of ghost miners and haunted Chinese souls whoosh rampant through these tracks. Recommended ear spook. Another unexpected dollop of god-

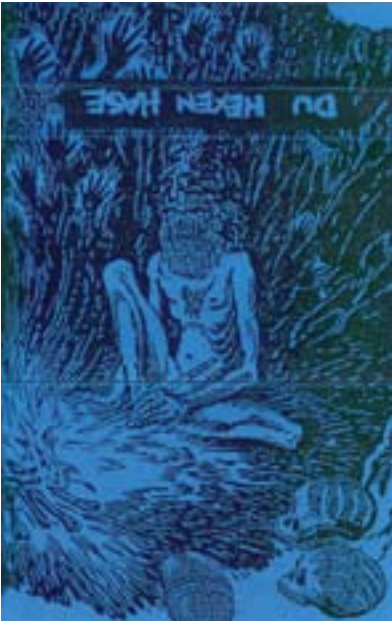


vibes. Very fucking great. This is the sound of Philly post-Bardo Pond and it sounds supreme. Looking forward to more. Please.

The reason we haven’t written about the new **Can’t LP Private Time (Part2) (Weird Forest)** sooner is because we’re still unwinding from Part 1 which Jessica Rylan (she who is Can’t) released on her own **irfp** cassette label a while back. That tape crushed us with its closed bedroom door noise-mind breath-on-ear intimacy. This LP is Can’t fully realized and if you have yet to sup upon her odd pleasure(s) then this is a jake joint to join hands. Jessica is renowned for her little blue boy noise machine inventions and here she busts smooth ass in full crackle/crunk glory. Elsewhere she gets raw with a minimal sing-song piece and then the over-amped hush-micro-phone borderline destruction minimalism she just fucking owns is put to great effect. It’s all very...private... yet she knows yr listening and wants you to maybe fall into the wayfaring world she seems to move through. An immensely happening LP.

Ms. Rylan comes out of the historically insane Providence, Rhode Island scene which continues to burble with extremely hard-to-figure freakos. One of the more intriguing labels there is **Rare Youth** and they’ve just issued a split LP by locals **Russian Tsarlag** and **Blue Shift**. We cranked the Russian Tsarlag side first and were transported into some odd cabaret of post-Half Jap sub-weirdness that was disturbingly charmed. Originally from Tampa, Florida and connected to the acclaimed Byron House and Dynasty as well as labels like **Cephia’s Treat**, Kites’ **Unskilled Labor** and Noise Nomads’ **Bonescraper**—Russian Tsarlag are exquisite purveyors of dark, dank and literate beat bohunkism with a Subaru-load of dry panache n’ brain-junk. Killer repetition and hypno-jam vibes—would like to dig these punks live. Blue Shift is a scratch-death violin which just happens to be crossing yr speaker-field. He stops to lick the back of yr powerbook and as you look up he falls down to the carpet mumbling and engaged. He’s that awesome. Record comes with a sweet suck of a booklet of art jam from **Cybele Collins** and **Carlos Gonzales** (the voice of Tsarlag).

While on the topic of Providence, worth mentioning (better late than never) is **Judith Tannenbaum’s Wunderground: Providence 1995 to the Present** (Gingko Press). This is a catalogue of a show documenting the arc of the Fort Thunder scene via posters, graphics, photos and text. The book looks fantastic, has plenty of fold-out pages to melt yr eyeballs, and boils over with a nerve-energy that’s intoxicating. Same goes for the great little volume, **Maggots**, by one of Prov’s more famous sons, **Brian Chippendale**. The book reprints one of his earliest extended visual narratives—skittery lines drawn heavily onto the pages of a Japanese book catalogue. Great dark thug baby-



top:
Du Hexen Hase
above:
Sewer Goddess' Cold Pleasure

genius, now revealed to all. Brian has also self-published the second issue of **Galactikrap** which is a kinda Gary Panter-meets-Moondog space odyssey with silkscreened covers and content as cute as a rat. As is the **Black Pus 4: All Aboard the Magic Pus** CDR (Diarrhea). **Black Pus** is Chippendale’s solo music project, and this time he’s got a much less free-form approach, making what must be called almost-pus-pop moves at times. Quakin’!

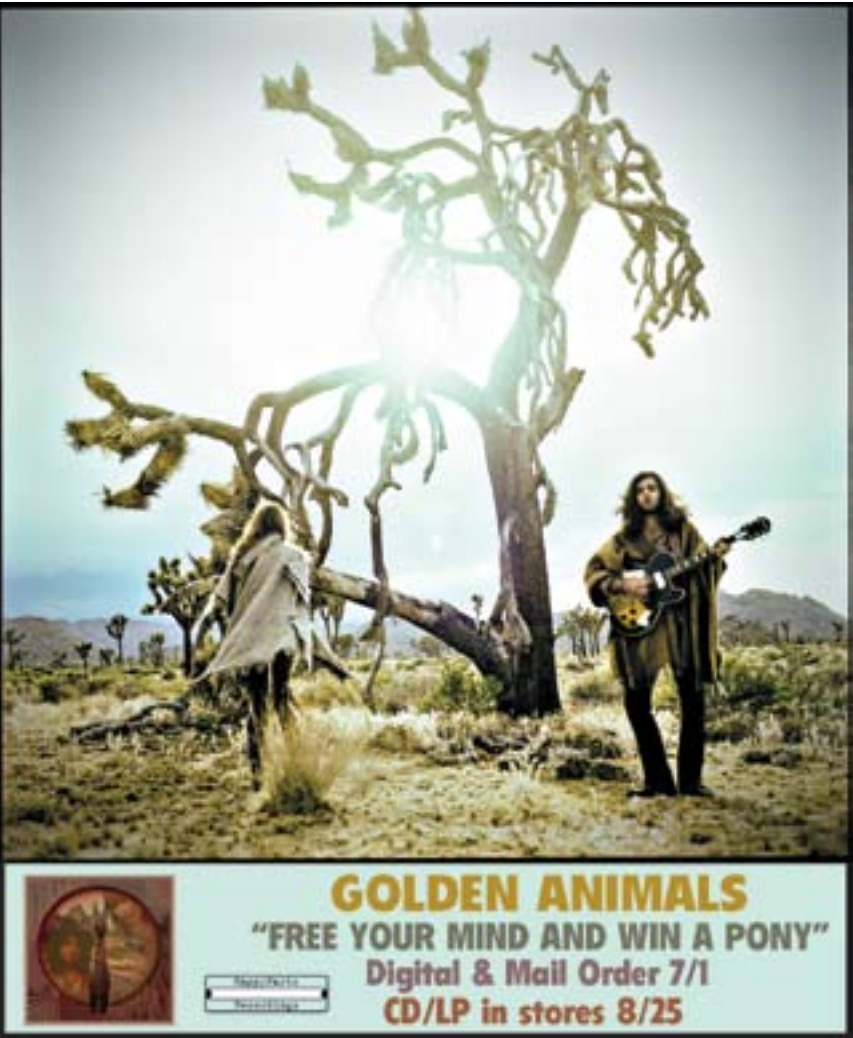
A swell new batch of ear-rub has arrived from Arizona’s **Gilgongo Records**. **Little Women’s Teeth** is a one-sided fire music champ. The band’s from Brooklyn (something of a side project to ZS) and they give the guitar a much higher profile than many of their jazzic peers, which is admirable and hot. At least until they start chanting! **Tent/City’s Drought** is one-sided as well, but silkscreened for extra pleasure. These guys are from Tempe, and their sound is a bit like Wooden Wand’s most free-folk gesturage—flowing, open & stoned with toots galore. This one ends in chanterly as well, making us wonder if a trend is afoot. This ques-

tion is resoundingly answered in the negatory by the eponymous **French Quarter** LP, which is chant-free. What fills it is lovely straight folk-yearn (Sam Bream style) with a production sound and voice that gives the music emotional depth and width, and sounds damn purty doin’ it. Lastly, but not leastly is **Arms** by **ZS**, which is a bit more inside than the Little Women record, but has a nice line-up (sax, guitar, two drums) and does some nice, tight, microshift jamming. They do return to the chant motif, however (albeit in a near-Arkestral mode), so that has to make us wonder. Y’know?

Sewer Goddess is a one-woman noise project out of Massachusetts that’s had a few recent recorded examples of entrancing gurgle and drone-skree that’ve got us drunk on wanting more. What we’ve encountered exist on the **Total Gape** and **Blood Libel Cult** comps from the **Negation Is Freedom** and **Razors & Medicine** labels respectively—both tracks sinister and dread-drenched with fright-tone textures of harsh-sound and freaked vocals. Along with those killers and a few CDRs comes a new solo tape **Cold Pleasure (Negation is Freedom)**. It is magnificent in its brevity and leaves you panting for more of it’s sex-dream/nightmare pull. Total yum-death. Another estimable one-human band from the area is **Joshua Burkett**, whose **Where’s My Hat** LP (**Time Lag**) is a wonderful involution

of volk-stylings. Josh has been amazingly virtuoustic in live performance recently, but this album is a spare and rather sunny mystery dance. Very old timey sounding in spots (as though dubbed from a 78), it has a hidden spine of purest gold. Time Lag also did a sweet vinyl edition of the **Woods’ Family Creeps** session, which is sometimes (by far) the poppest thing these Brooklyn folk-fucks have ever done, but that just means it has insidious hooks. It’s not their “fault.” It’s ours.

The **Middle James Co.** label out of Hamilton, Ontario is relentless in excreting local noise effluvia. Head honcho **David Payne** has recently been collaborating with sub-fi Michigan basement creep **Andrew Coltrane**, another prolific sense-jamming scientist of harsh noise vision, with not only musical head-ons but art spew as well. Their **Zombie Train** **Zombie Pain** and **TNT** tapes are decent enough places to start but try and grip the stapled xerox mags they’ve been making as they are real boss eye burn beauties. Looking forward to the **Higher Voltage** LP they’ve been threatening to unbridle. Other new swoop on MJC is the **Jesuve** tape by **CM**, which is **Todd Brooks** from Brooklyn’s intriguing **Pendu Sound Recordings** collective along with **Ghost Moth** who have been doing those cool releases with free jazz maestro wildman **Daniel Carter** and something called **Mialessot**.



This tape is awesome gas-tank bomb blast subcurrent explosion-core; real depth-charge action with an assured musical head-feel. MJC has been doing what they call their SHORTY series of shorter tapes (we think that’s what’s going on) of more outside-the-outside stuff. An amazing one is surely the **Mike Khoury & Hans Buetow** live duo cassette from a 2004 Michigan meet. Khoury is violin and Buetow is cello. We know Buetow from his ripping shred work with **Graveyards, Melee** and **Traum** and most brain-searingly with **Aaron Dilloway** at 2008’s No Fun festival where the two men DESTROYED the main stage with a complete atmosphere-annihilation of a set. Dilloway’s wheelbarrow/shovel duo with Buetow’s cello which bookended the gig is already legend.

Buetow and Ben Hall, the drummer from **Graveyards** and **Melee**, are also the proprietors of the **Broken Research** label, and they just sent a couple of superb LPs that are very much in keeping with their personal avant garde tradition. **Jeff Armal & Dietrich Eichmann’s Live in Hamburg** is a great duo performance for Brooklyn percussionist Arnal (maybe best known for work with **Charles Gayle**) and pianist Eichmann (a **von Schlippenbach** student who reportedly focused more on composition until recently). The session is super-active and outward reaching without ever slowing down very much.

Very righteous playing, and these guys communicate at a pretty high level. an eponymous **Paul Lytton/ Nate Wooley** LP finds Melee’s young trumpeter and the veteran percussionist locked in a kind of bone-scraping mortal combat that gets into some ingenious free music situations, where instrumentation is anyone’s guess and the mode is pure attack. There is also a pair of conceptually twinned LPs, **Bare Those Excellent Teeth Pt. 1 & 2**, by **Graveyards** and **Melee**, respectively. The Graveyards’ disk is savagely restrained for them, almost hermetic. It shows a bit more overtly than usual how the music of Hall and Buetow (who, along with John Olson, comprise Graveyards), is rooted in the Bennington composition mode. There’s a real feel of that here—subtle woodwinds, stretched tonal bass, light drum clatter and all. The Melee session is similar. And nice as hell. Graveyards also have a solid, untitled set of tunes on a new 8” lathe-cut from the chaps at **Alt.Vinyl** (Northern England’s best store/label). It’s a fuggin’ reflective masterwork as well, and scheduled to be part of a series that should rip serious sac. Gonna file these all in the jazz annex, which is a testament to something.

Seattle’s **Du Hexen Hase** have a sweltering zoned-guitar tape called **Dark Slobby Cave** (self-released) which states that they are some kind of “final jams.” If this means like really

CONTINUED ON PG 17

IN MEMORIAM

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DRUMS IN YOUR HEAD.
THEY TRIED TO BAN YOUR
RAW SWAGGERING URGENCY,
THE GLEEFUL THRUST OF
YOUR CALL AND RESPONSE,
YOUR GUNSLINGING HORNIRMS
OF DISSENT. YOUR POWERHOUSE
STRUM SURELY IS THE ROARING
‘R’ IN R&B AND YOUR INFLUENCE
CAN NEVER BE CALCULATED BY
MERE MORTALS - AS YOU RAMBLE
INTO ROCK N’ROLL VALHALLA.

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AN INSTANT PARTY & AN INSTANT CLASSIC

BY JULIAN COPE



Reviewed:

NATHANIEL MAYER WHY DON'T YOU GIVE IT TO ME? ALIVE RECORDS, 2007

This is not a parody. This album is nothing less than an heroic act, being both an extraordinary art statement of cavernous Detroit Psychedelic soul AND a major mission of Cultural Retrieval. For, with the help of four contemporary musicians at least 25 years younger than himself, veteran Detroit R&B star Nathaniel Mayer has with this single LP lifted himself out of the worthy but Old Timer Chicken-in-a-Basket Soul Revue scene, and been delivered into the welcoming hands of the drooling and mightily entranced Underground. And believe me, kiddies, retrieving the voice of Nathaniel Mayer for our own delectation makes the musicians in question into true culture heroes; so let's scream out major hails to the Black Keys' Dan Auerbach, SSM's Dave Shettler, the Dirtbombs' Troy Gregory, and (most especially) to mainman and prime mover Matthew Smith. For, despite claims to the contrary, even Mayer's recent 2004 LP *I Just Wanna Be Held* still suffered from boring, nay, dutiful sax, boring 'authentic' guitar tones and songs written in the Retro/Retread soul vein. Well, not anymore! Now, it's welcome to weeping dual fuzz guitars, proto-punk garage rhythms, nuclear burn-ups of free-rock De Twat, and all topped off with a changeling R&B guy whose vocal range takes in everything from Screaming Jay Hawkins to Dionne Warwick, via George Clinton, early I-Tina, Ray Charles and James Brown by way of the Monks. *Why Don't You Give It To Me?* is an instant party and an instant classic, an immensely stoned groove and an exhilarating and swampy hybrid of the early call-&-answer heavy soul of Funkadelic (first three LPs), the cacophonous Glam Soul of John & Yoko's *Sometime in New York City*, the fuzzy earnestness of early early early Bob Seger ('Heavy Music'-period), the abandoned lyrical Free Association of Kim Fowley's berserk *Psychedelic Psoul Revue on Outrageous*, plus the murky voodoo gunk of Night Tripper-period Dr. John. Yes, from its very first sub-sub-Chocolate Watchband/very early Stones opening bars, this new Nathaniel Mayer record screams: "Here I AM!" Better still, after his aforementioned stilted 2004 album *I Just Wanna Be Held*, it's enthralling to hear this veteran 64-year-old Detroit R&B singer finally united with a truly sympathetic backing band chock full o'garageheads who been raised on such

errant fuzzarama garage compilations as *Pebbles 1-12*, *Back From the Grave 1,2 & 3*, *Hipsville 29BC*, *Off the Wall*, *Turds On a Bum Ride* and their glorious ilk, suddenly lending Nathaniel the kind of guitar-heavy demented amphetamine yawp that forces his own performance sky high. The results are no less than immediate and spectacular. Indeed, from the moment Nathaniel Mayer nobbled me with the title track's lyrical opening gambit—"You gave it to him, why don't you give it to me?"—well, I knew this artist would have "Album of the Month" honors just so long as he didn't fuck up the remaining 36 minutes TOO much. Ja, mein hairies, this six-month-old vinyl slab is truly one motherfucker of an album. Side One of *Why Don't You Give It To Me?* commences with the title track, whose enormous Bats In The Belfry belltone guitar riffing and cranky leaden drums immediately sets the listener on edge, before our hero steps into the spotlight and immediately crouches down on one knee to confess his pain to his coy mistress, the half-written lyrical abandon of Nathaniel's song-writing (spawning such couplets as "You made him a happy man all across the land") reinforcing our suspicions that this record's producers knew they had limited studio time in which to make this record, before the whole shithouse exploded in their faces. Next up is the Electric Manchakou-style teenage exuberance of "White Dress", another work-in-progress being sketched out before our very eyes, like some wide-eyed and ageless shaman/woman cooing and billing in wonder at the opposite sex over three minutes of "Shake Appeal"-period Stooges replete with handclaps and endless questions. This is followed by "I'm a Lonely Man", four minutes of the most shameless (and tuneless) BACK FROM THE GRAVE-stylee garage voodoo, as Nate vamps and grunts the song's title over & over. Next up, the chorale-and-heavy-riffology of "Please Don't Drop the Bomb" is pure early Funkadelic ambient ice-rink funk, whilst Side One closes with the three-and-a-half minutes of "Everywhere", which—with its boys-being-chicks backing vocals and wide-eyed asides, sounds like a wonderful hybrid of John Sinclair's super-exuberant late acolytes the Up playing a song by Leslie West's soul garage outfit the Vagrants. Side Two opens with the Knock On Wood-styled "What Would You Do?", another lost classic riff, followed by the weird West Coast 9-minute free rock of "Doin' It", whose cheese-grater wa-guitars, bubbling bass, clatter-chatter drums and belltone blues lead axe all conspire to create a wild, almost proto-Comets on Fire rush that sounds like it coulda come off any of the best Detroit rock LPs anytime in the past 40 years.

...welcome to weeping dual fuzz guitars, proto-punk garage rhythms, nuclear burn-ups of free-rock De Twat...

No wonder this record has been filed under "Rock" on iTunes. Indeed, only on the 7-minute closer "Why Dontcha Show Me?" does Nate return to his sultry soul roots. Commencing with a Ray Charles-styled piano-only opening coupla verses, this exquisitely crafted and sexy song suddenly metamorphoses into a percussion-heavy bossanova somewhere between Tim Buckley's "Sweet Surrender" and Timmy Thomas's "Why Can't We Live Together?". This record is one mind-manifesting rock behemoth, but the confidence of this final statement lifts the entire LP up even another coupla notches.



above:
Nay-Dog plus pooch


And so there we have it. With regard to where Nathaniel Mayer takes him next step, well, we probably shouldn't set our hopes up too high considering Mayer's first hit 'Village of Love' was way back in 1962, thereafter ambling and shambling through long periods of handlessness, giglessness, even homelessness. However, even a perfunctory trawl through Nate's current youtube performances suggests that this sexagenerian singer is once more enjoying himself enough to attempt to sustain what he's currently achieving. And, on the huge evidence of this wonderful album, we can only cross our fingers and selfishly hope that he barfs out a few more in this present stylee, before the (inevitable?) next crash. For the time being, however, we need only take a cursory glance at rock'n'roll history to feel a sense of optimism. For example, we only gotta look at Alex Harvey to see the renewal that an Old Timer could achieve just through taking on a much younger backing band. Later, at the inception of punk, mother-of-two Vi Subversa split up her cabaret duo and lead her own outfit the Poison Girls, all twenty-odd-years younger than her, and became the co-leader of the new punk alongside Crass. Unfortunately, we just have to hope that Nathaniel's current ensemble can find time in their busy careers to stay around and keep him buoyant. What has made Why Don't You Give It To Me? so successful is the abandoned-yet-still-dignified character that Nathaniel brings to the party, so on the case that none of the producers has felt tempted to cast him as a mere eccentric outsider, a path trod by so many lesser talented or less honourably-minded mentors. Which is why this particular album is so fucking refreshing, because— instead of recruiting as lead singer for their new project the local gangliest youth with the

biggest garage rock LP collection in his basement, instead, several enlightened and currently successful rockers have come together to back a forgotten 64-year-old R&B singer, a man of undoubted song-writing talent and possessed of a genuinely extraordinary set of vocal chords, but whose luck has been intermittent to say the least. That three successful contemporary rock'n'rollers should have sought out and championed such a lost hero is heroic in itself, and Dan Auerbach, Troy and—most especially—Matthew Smith should be praised to the skies That the chosen artist should rise to the occasion in such a manner is even more thrilling, which is why I say to Nathaniel Mayer: "Bravo, Lord Motherfucker, and deep gratitude for laying this Righteous Thang upon us." Amen.

FOOTNOTES:
1. Released on Fat Possum Records in 2004, *I Just Wanna Be Held* was a brave-but-failed attempt to capture Nathaniel's live sound on record. Unfortunately, the band was too straight and "authentic" to have any real resonance with today, and the album is something of a one trick pony; only Nathaniel's brutal version of John Lennon's "I Found Out" somewhat anticipating the sound of this current record, and making me think he'd do an even better job on Lennon's other soul masterpiece of that period "Well Well Well". However, those wishing to check out *I Just Wanna Be Held* will probably enjoy the James Brown-sy "You Gotta Work" and the strange album closer "What's Your Name", which contains a futuristic funk that comes across like early Talking Heads playing the Berlin soul of the Rolling Stones' "Shattered".

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The debut album from the Portland quartet Trees delivers two epic tracks of monolithic, blackened doom metal with a twisted, noise-damaged approach and a dank basement vibe. Trees craft glacial abstract riffs and rivers of ashen amplifier goo that fans of feedback-laden heaviness will find highly satisfying, a kind of grinding, slow-motion black hole psychedelia that has a similar hypnotic death-ritual quality as artists like Bloody Panda and Khanate, but with their own unique trance state of swirling guitar textures, horrific jet black drossescapes and ghouliah, excruciating vocals. Features members of the PDX psych-sludge outfit Tecumseh (Important Records). Presented in a four-panel Stoughton gatefold jacket.

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C&D

Two dudes, who remain pseudonymous for their own protection, reason together about new records. They are joined this issue by Melvins' BUZZ OSBORNE...

ENDLESS BOOGIE FOCUS LEVEL (NO QUARTER)

D: [listening to opening bomber] He's inviting us over to smoke "figs" in his yard. Is that a misprint?

C: [pointing at band photograph] They're in the backyard because these guys are too old too be smokin' in the boys' room. Another in a great history of smoking location songs.

D: That could be a Bob Dylan Theme Time Radio Hour!

C: And invitation songs. Remember that Paul Wine Jones song? "Me and the boys/gonna have a good time tonight/Gonna play some poker/Pork chops." I miss Paul Jones. That guy rocked and had velvet hats to burn. Not that you should ever burn a velvet hat.

D: [musing over band photo, especially the longhair] What does that guy do all day?

C: When not masquerading as a hick savant guarding mama's moonshine still? Apparently he's one of the deepest psych record collectors on the East Coast.

D: [looking at band picture again] I would say he's one of the top hair growers on the East Coast!

C: Endless hair never ends. Seriously though, a band like this only needs one True Believer. And this guy definitely qualifies, let me tell you!

D: [listening to singers squeal, squawk, mutter and grunt on "The Manly Vibe"] Brings back fond memories of Hasil Adkins talking about hot dogs and doing the hunch.

C: Yeah, if Hasil dug the Nuge instead of the King. This album is for everyone who's ever thought George Thorogood didn't finish the job.

D: [abruptly] Or that the Kings of Leon aren't old enough!

C: ... Anyways, I saw these guys play last week.

D: Well of the course the question is, Can they boogie endlessly?

C: Yes, they are quite capable, these Endless Boogiemens. And after the first song, which lasted about two and a half hours, the singer asked "Do I seem taller? I got some new shoes!" Where'd you get 'em? somebody yelled. He took a few seconds, and then answered: "I bought 'em at a store!" They've got cool t-shirts: just an infinity sign on black.

D: Can you understand what he's singing?

C: He's singing in tongues. This song is called "Steak Rock." Which is about right. I bet the song is timed so that you can cook a steak in the amount of time it takes to listen to it. So where's the barbecue at?

D: Not in my backyard, sadly.

C: This record should come with an order of peach cobbler.

D: [helpfully] And napkins!

C: ...

D: [doorbell rings] We have a guest.

[Enter Melvins vocalist/guitarist Buzz "King Buzzo" Osborne]

Buzz: Gentlemen.

C [to himself]: Speaking of singing in tongues...

D [jumps up, joyful, and bows]: All hail King Buzzo.

Buzz: I brought drinks. Diet Coke and Lemon Perrier for everyone! What are we listening to? Seems good.

C: What do you think about the vocals?

Buzz: [considers] Pretty Humble Pie sounding.

C: What about...Black Oak Arkansas? You guys ever listen to them?

Buzz: I like some of that stuff, yeah. Simply for the weirdness factor alone. I always thought that [Black Oak Arkansas singer] Jim Dandy was getting ripped off endlessly by David Lee Roth, and moreso, Axl Rose. He sings EXACTLY like Jim Dandy. You know who else is really into Black Oak Arkansas is Jello Biafra. Heavily! That's why Biafra has that star belt. He's happy to admit it.

C: Didn't Black Oak Arkansas buy land and live communally at one point?

Buzz: I don't know the history. Jello [Biafra—of Dead Kennedys, Alternative Tentacles label, and an occasional collaborator with Melvins] knows more about any band than anyone I've ever known. His mom was a librarian and he has that kind of mentality built in. This friend of ours who was friends with Jello in the early '80s had given him a cassette demo of ours. Well, Jello gave me that demo back recently. He still had it! Are you fucking kidding me?? CASSETTE! It's insane. He's got every demo, every CD, every T-shirt that's he ever gotten sent to AT, he's got catalogued. It's crazy. I was with Jello once when he found a mono one-sided 7-inch of "TV Eye" that the Stooges put out. I just gave up. His collection is all just from him digging and digging and digging. Ah, what is this again? It's pretty good.

D: Endless Boogie!

C: They are not men.

D: They are endless boogiemens.

C: No—they are record collectors! [C and D crack up]

Buzz: I don't know that I'd buy it but I think it's pretty good. I don't fault them...

C: I don't think anyone expects anyone to buy this. It gets further out as it goes on, like a long modern trance/raga record a la Paul Butterfield Blues Band's "East/West." Abstract Beefheart, going for long walks wandering round the desert instead of holing up in a trailer and weirding out.

ARP IN LIGHT (SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND)

C: It's a guy holing up in San Francisco and weirding out. He calls the project *Arp*.

Buzz: Like the Arp synthesizer?

C: Yep. As far as band naming goes, vintage

top:
Buzz holding King Darves album



left:
Al Green with
?uestlove
below:
Endless Boogie



gear is the new "Wolf plus noun."

D: Sunn o)))!

C: I hear the influence of the Moon too. I went up to Big Sur before it burned and saw Arp play at night outside the Henry Miller Library. I had a few sasparillas and they blew my mind, making moonglow soundwebs around the trees.

Buzz: This stuff is alright. I've heard a lot of stuff like this before. It all sounds like people are trying to do soundtracks for the Mario Brothers. Which isn't necessarily a bad thing. That's cool. I don't know if I'd buy it. It's good! I wouldn't turn it off if it happened to be on.

C: What kind of mood?

Buzz: Music for cleaning your house. There's a few Melvins records that we've described as "music for vacuuming." You know? Sounds better with the vacuum running! Crank it up with the vacuum?!

D: When is that, when you're doing chores at the Melvins house?

Buzz: We woulda quit a long time ago if we had to live together. But I don't even play loud music in my house. Most of the time I want to be able to hear a pin drop.

C: Do you check out a lot of new music?

Buzz: When it's in front of me I do, definitely. I don't go to a lot of live shows simply because we play a lot of live shows I can't stand the idea of going to another fuckin' club on my off-time. The car's the best place to play music, I think.

[listening to Arp] Yeah, this is good.

AL GREEN LAY IT DOWN (BLUE NOTE)

Buzz: This is *new*? Wow. I would not have known.

C: ?uestlove from the Roots knows and respects how the old, good stuff got made, he's always had a good ear...

Buzz: Al Green—he's off his rocker, that's for sure. You ever heard one of those interviews with him? Hahaha. The other guys in Fantomas, Mike [Patton] and Trevor [Dunn], are really into him. Fantomas used to do a cover of his song "Simply Beautiful." It was about as straight a cover as we ever did. This is nice!

[laughs] He's a minister, isn't he? That's cool. It doesn't sound like he's ready for the insane asylum just yet! That sounds like good driving music, for nice long drives straight past Sedona or something. Do *not* stop for gas. Take a right at Flagstaff and just keep *going*.

DENNIS WILSON PACIFIC OCEAN BLUE (LEGACY/COLUMBIA)

D: Speaking of being outdoors...

Buzz: Beach Boys?

C: It's actually the solo album that drummer Dennis Wilson made in the mid-'70s, remastered and all that, first time it's been on CD ever domestically, second disc has unfinished recordings for his second album, *Bambu*, which was in progress when he drowned.

D: [spookily] And he drowned in the *Pacific Ocean*.

Buzz: I've never heard this. Sounds like he'd been listening to a lot of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. I think they should've added more low end on the reissue. There's also this high end, it's almost a hissing sound, that's all I can hear now. I mean, I appreciate the Beach Boys' insanity but I would question whether he's even on this, even singing.

C: It's him.

Buzz: Well, you never know. This is nice...

D: Imagine being the kid brother of a genius,



above:
Buffalo Killers

BUFFALO KILLERS LET IT RIDE (ALIVE/BOMP)

C: Trio, two brothers, burly bearded bass and guitar, harmonies. Ohio. Second album, *Let It Ride*.

D: [to himself] Lay it down, let it ride: all these album titles are highly suggestive.

Buzz: Production-wise, I would like to have heard more kick drums. I can't hear it at all. Which I think is a mistake for this kind of music, first off. Can you hear it? I can't hear a kick drum, not at all. Seems like it needs it, would really push the song along better. Seems like they're good players... [listening] Ah! *There* is some kick drum.

D: This and the Howlin Rain album, in the same year? American rock is rolling again!

C: It just has a *nice*...feel. Everything is working for this band: melodies, riffs, harmonies, rhythms, guitar tone...

Buzz: If you're gonna start a band and play this kind of music, you're setting yourself up for a pretty hard row to hoe, you know? So much of this stuff has been done. In order to stand above, you really have to do something extraordinary. That's tough. That's like becoming a famous opera singer, you've got your hands full. But this seems good.

C: You've got to stand against the canon.

Buzz: Yeah. Forty fucking years of it! That's tough. See, I wouldn't have the guts to try and do that. Doing stuff like this, I would just feel like I was up against the masters and it would be hard to... I'd rather do something that's a little bit more a hybrid, a little more my own. These guys seem like they're pretty good. It seems well produced, well executed, they seem like good players, their heart's in the right place. I believe them when they're doing it, which is always important in music. You have to believe it. If the people doing it don't seem like they

believe it, why should I?

C: It doesn't matter what they're doing as long as they believe it.

Buzz: I think so. I've always thought you should pretend like you know things you don't. It's the most important thing.

HERCULES AND LOVE AFFAIR HERCULES AND LOVE AFFAIR (DFA/MUTE US)

Buzz: Is this NEW???

C: DFA makes a disco album with Antony singing. You can't lose.

Buzz: Sounds nice. They look like a bunch of weirdos, that always helps. It's always good to be peculiar. Being peculiar is never going to hurt you.

D: You ever listen to disco?

Buzz: No not really. Depending on what you mean by disco. Blondie? Yes. Donna Summer? Not really, no. I just didn't pay any attention to it. None of my friends were into it, I didn't go to dances. Although I guess I always liked the way those chicks looked. But I was 14, and I was into pretty much the way *any girl* looked at that point, you know? Just such a mystery, you know? That I'm still figuring out. Hopefully, I'll never figure it out! That would be totally boring. There's so much you CAN'T learn, you know?

D: [getting in the philosophical mood] Do you know less now than you did then?

Buzz: I wish I knew then what I know now. That would've made it a lot easier. I wouldn't have worried so much.

C: Really?

Buzz: I didn't have any idea really of what was gonna happen to me, you know? There was a short period in my life when I didn't really care, but generally speaking, I didn't have a whole lot of high hopes. Now, I'm a lot more relaxed. We kind of have it figured out, as far as Melvins are concerned. As long as we don't pretend that

we're gonna be dusting off five number one gold albums, then we'll be fine. But then, I never did pretend that. Nothing's changed...

C: The Internet isn't killing Melvins?

Buzz: *[laughs]* I timed it: our new album *[Nude With Boots, out now on Ipecac]* was available on the internet within 48 hours of the advances going out.

C: Do you care? Has the internet made music better or worse?

Buzz: I think it's much better than it was! I was ordering Sex Pistols records out of the back of Creem magazine back in '77-8. I was really into Ted Nugent, Aerosmith, all that stuff when I was about 12. Creem always had weird looking bands. I saw a picture of the Sex Pistols. I thought, "This looks interesting." That was it. Same with the Clash, the Damned... Solely on the way they looked, the pictures. Some mail-order thing, they'd have a list of records you could buy. It took weeks for them to arrive. I lived maybe 150 miles from the nearest record store that would have had had anything of that nature. When you're between 12 and 15, for me anyway, 150 miles might as well have been 150 million miles. Right now you can sit down with any cheap computer and figure out histories and what's going on, it's GREAT. Tremendous.

C: We had Sam Goody and Warehouse.

D: Now they have the Internet and Hot Topic, and all they want is emo!

Buzz: *[laughs]* So much for that argument!

C: They have the Internet, but still, *they do not understand.*

Buzz: They never did. That's not going to change. But, information-wise, it's way easier. Look. When I started out going to see a band play, I would have to drive to Seattle to buy a ticket for a concert. That was a 150-mile one-way trip to get up there and have em tell you, "Sorry, it's sold out"? No, no, no! I would've happily paid a Ticketmaster fee so I could have got my hands on a ticket as opposed to driving up all the way to Seattle to have them tell you, Nope, the Motorhead show's sold out, sorry! No no no no. It's way better now. Waaaay better.

KING DARVES THE SUN SPLITS FOR THE BLIND SWIMMER (DE STIJL)

[Silence, listening to "Oh I've Come A Ragin Sun"]

Buzz: Who's this???

C: This is his first record.

Buzz: This the first song on it? Always interesting how bands decide what the first song's going to be on the CD.

C: What's a good strategy?

Buzz: No idea. That's the tricky part, you know?

C: *[listens to "What for the Stables"]* Reminds me of Michael Gira, from mid-Swans and Angels of Light eras.

Buzz: Yeah. Leonard Cohen, possibly. Seems good. He seems pretty scary.

C: He's a weirdbeardie for sure. A baritone Will Oldham?

D: *[musing]* "Baritone Will Oldham" should be Bonnie Prince Billy's new stage name.

C: It does have a nice roll to it, doesn't it?

Buzz: *["This Ivory" begins]* This one doesn't sound as scary. This is the fourth song? This is what he has batting clean-up on the record. This is gonna drive the rest of them home?

D: He's gonna drive them home, but not too fast.

Buzz: This is pretty good! It's really weird. Interesting, definitely.

C: It's really striking. You don't hear guys sing



top:

Awesome Color

above:

Hercules and Love Affair

right:

Seun Kuti

like this too often, cuz the bar actually is so high. So when one does, we should pay attention. Noah Georgeson's songs are like this too, really beautiful music sung in a lower register than we're used to hearing. Someone told me Stephen Merritt from Magnetic Fields sounds like this? *[listening to "Fishhook"]* This one's almost Johnny Cash.

Buzz: I can hear that. It's a really ambient recording. He's not right in your face. The mic's ten feet away or something, recorded the whole thing at once. That's what it sounds like to me, a total live recording. Where's he from?

C: I'll look it up—*[sad]*—on the Internet, of course.

D: *[out of nowhere]* The Internet was introduced to the public prematurely! It should've been developed further so that it wouldn't have become so jammed with stupid shit. It's making the whole culture dumber, right when we needed everybody to get *smarter*. The country that first embraced the Internet—the United States—is the same Western country that's shifted the furthest towards militarism and authoritarianism in the last 40 years! That is no coincidence! *[leaves for kitchen]*

C: *[explaining to Buzz]* D has been bitching



about the Internet a lot lately.

Buzz:

C: What do you think? Is the Internet making us smarter?

Buzz: Who knows. Probably to some degree. It's helping somehow. Has to! *[Thinks further]* I guess it's debatable. People have always been stupid, I suppose. *[Thinks further]* Well, it's better for me. I love it. I'm hoping our friend King Darves is from Modesto. *[cackles]* Or San Diego. A beach community.

C: It's great this way, but I can also imagine him singing with a choir, or a string section...

Buzz: Yeah. He could definitely be a little more adventurous in his production, no doubt about, which would be really amazing. He's got a lot of potential. But if it doesn't get any better than that for him, this is still *really good*. *[laughs]*

FREE KITTEN INHERIT (ECSTATIC PEACE)

Buzz: Who's this?

C: Kim Gordon and Julie Cafritz, and Ikue.

D: How can they call themselves Free Kitten without Ibold!

Buzz: Nice letterpressed promo.

D: This is serious! It's not Free Kitten without

Ibold!

C: Not too many duet albums from electric guitar playing female singers in their forties and fifties.

Buzz: Nope, not too many of those. I would say...never? The Shaggs, maybe? I didn't know Julia was still doing music.

C: I think it's the first time in a long time that she—**D:** What?? Who gives a fig about Cafritz? Where's Ibold!

C: Buzz, you ever see Julie in Pussy Galore?

Buzz: We played with Pussy Galore. I loved them, thought they were great. The lineup I liked best was without her. Three guitar players. But my favorite record of theirs was probably the *Sugarshit Sharp* EP. We even did a cover off it, a b-side on a seven-inch a long time ago.

'Industrial rockabilly' was the way I described it. Which I thought was really cool, you know? They were on our wishlist for ATP *[December 2008's "Nightmare Before Christmas" festival in England put on by All Tomorrow's Parties, and curated by Melvins with Mike Patton]*.

C: That's never gonna happen.

Buzz: I know, but if you don't ask, you don't get. Yeah we played with them in '89 I think. Real

good. I think *[Jon] Spencer [from Pussy Galore]*, once again, fits into the 'peculiar'/weirdo category. Definitely peculiar. He's one of these guys that writes music, that he probably perceives as being more commercial sounding than it really is. The way he looks at it. He doesn't see it.

D: Free Kitten are now Number 1 on my official shitlist! This is bullshit, man. WHERE'S IBOLD?!

DAFT PUNK ELECTROMA DVD (VICE)

Buzz: *[Film starts]* *Death Race 2000* mixed with *Way of the Gun*... with the cops from THX. Is it supposed to be this quiet?

C: Yup.

Buzz: Weird. I don't know anything about these guys really.

C: French techno electro guys who always appear in helmet and costume.

D: Like Kiss!

Buzz: This obviously wasn't filmed in France, or at least not any section of France I've ever been to. Looks like the set of *Star Trek*. Or New Mexico. I love driving through areas like that, one of my favorite things in the world to do. Especially touring, that's what's so great about it. You get a lot of this kind of stuff. I don't know if you've ever done that sort of stuff.

C: Not enough. You don't want to live out in the desert, though?

Buzz: I've done my time in the sticks. I can't think of anywhere I'd rather live than here in L.A. Where would you go? Connecticut? Texas? [Returning to the subject at hand] This is cool so far. I'm hooked. [The license plate for the car that Daft Punkers are driving shows on the screen. Buzz reads aloud:] "HUMAN."

C: That's one of my favorite songs of all time! It's Todd Rundgren—

Buzz: I've never listened to him.

C: It's from *A Wizard A True Star*. Not exactly a record, or an artist, in fashion right now, so it's interesting to see it so prominently featured in a film by guys that are appearing at the Grammys with Kanye West.

C: The weird thing about this film, I don't think Daft Punk even put their own music on here...

Buzz: Weird! I really admire that. [continues to comment on action on screen] Is there going to be an Indian casino in the middle of nowhere? ... Uh oh, this is where it gets dangerous, with the manure spreaders...

Another guy with a helmet! Whaddya know. Well, safety first as they say... Hmm. So they're just one of many now... Does the baby have a helmet on? Looks like it...Uh, speaking of helmets, I gotta go.

D: What, you got a hair appointment?

Buzz: I wear it natural. Later...

AWESOME COLOR ELECTRIC ABORIGINES (ECSTATIC PEACE)

C: New full-lengther from Iggy's three-headed stepchildren.

D: Less Stooges this time 'round, more... I'm not sure.

C: Alison may be America's most exciting young drummer. But: I'm really more into the Awesomes' other projects right now: Red Dawn II! Weirid Modules! *Arthur* readers should investigate on their own, using the power of ... the Internet.

D: Doh!

SEUN KUTI & FELA'S EGYPT 80 MANY THINGS (DISORIENT)

C: Well, here we have Fela's second son,



playing original numbers with members of his father's group Egypt 80. He's not his father. But definitely his father's son. I can't wait to see Seun at Felabration in Lagos in October, with [older brother] Femi—and Egypt 80—AND TONY ALLEN AND GINGER BAKER!!!! This is great. It's afro, it's beat...
D: It's blazing! Who could not want to listen to this? Whazzup Shawn Cooti!
C: It's pronounced "Shay-oon Koo-ti"...

JEX THOTH JEX THOTH (I HATE RECORDS)

C: ...and this is "Jacks Toe-th."

D: Jex Thoth? *[muses]* This is the name Lovecraft would give to a female superspy. Thoth. Jex Thoth.

C: Spooky music for spooky times.

D: My favorite thing about impending doom is this type of metal. I call it, impending doom metal. Is Jex Thoth her real name?

C: I believe it's her nom de doom. Jex's voice reminds me of Ingha Rumpf from German blues rock thumpers Frumpy. Beckoning from the back of a shadowy cave. This one's called "When The Raven Calls"! Evoking ashen streets where even urchins no longer dare. Foreboding axe leads straight outta Slab City, CA....and yet...there's a shuffling bop step to the drumming that makes me almost start to snap my doomy fingers. Instead I shall pump my doomy fist!

D: Y'know, I wish Buzz was still here.

C: Yeah. How bad do you miss him?

D: Pretty...I dunno. Whoa, I mean I think Buzz would really like this!

C: It's metallurgy, paganomics and rhapsod-omy rolled into one bewitching rock package.

D: Call it kohl rock.

C: Shall I show you a picture of the girl who is singing?

D: Oh I can picture her in my mind very well... Like if Ozzy had a daughter who looked like what I'd want Ozzy's daughter to look like.

C: ...

a



top:

Jex Thoth

above:

Free Kitten

right:

King Darves

=====



finally FINAL then fuck too bad cuz this trio has a fantastic hold of slow spirit improv physio-bleat. ***They Showed Me the Secret Beaches (CSAF)*** LP is the fourth album by connect_icut, a solo project by expat-Brit, **Sam Macklin**. It takes a lot of standard “pretty” electronic practices and flops them over on their sides, not unlike some work by Australian Oren Ambarchi. There’s pop crafting here, but it’s subtle and allowed to evolve in its own darkly idiosyncratic way, with space bells a-wigglin’. Not bad, Sam. The eponymous debut MLP by Youngstown, Ohio’s **Panzer Talk (On/On Switch)** keeps reminding me of that track-by-track solo cover of *After the Goldrush* that VCO’s Mick Flower recently did. Not that these guys sound particularly Young-specific, but they manifest the same acoustic/electric blend, and manage to flop around in a way that recalls Neil crossed with Wilco crossed with a garage band that’s quite ept. Different strokes all around. A little sweeter overall, is the eponymous debut CD by New Hampshire’s **Redwing Blackbird (Red Room)**. This duo has some of the same moves as French Quarter, and the songs they write seem capable of burrowing deep. Another aural spelunker is **Gown**, whose ***For the Maples LP (Three Lobed)*** is his noisiest since some of his early cassettes. Possibly this has to do with the fact that several members of Sunburned appear in spots, but whatever the reason—it’s a pants-down-earthlings sound all around. Should also mention that Three Lobed has started their new subscription CD series, and a particular fave has been **Howlin’ Rain’s Wild Life**, which features **Ben Chasny**, and a totally blown-ouy blues-bash format. Until next time, Stay free.

Byron Coley does not do well in the heat. Thurston Moore is the current bass player in Teenage Jesus and the Jerks.

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“Aurora and surprisingly danceable group that combines a beautiful Khmer-language vocalist from Cambodia and a quintet of seasoned locals with a knack for mixing Southeast Asian pop, Vietnam-war-era lounge music, klezmer, ska, surf rock, and Ethiopian jazz.” — Spin



My Education
Bad Vibrations
 SAA 55

Bad Vibrations showcases My Education’s sonic flights as sharply honed, highly melodic mini-epics. Layers of guitar swell and sway over propulsive rhythms while viola spins yearning melodies ever skyward, sprinkled with delicate color by vibraphone and keyboards. Book-ended by ambient passages pilowing heavy-lidded acoustic strumming languid strings and lap-steel, *Bad Vibrations* is certainly the finest summation of the Austin, Texas quartet’s highly textured and emotive music yet.



D+
On Purpose
 KWW 81

Ten years of near hits, rarities and live tracks, *On Purpose* is the sound of D+ stumbling on clarity, an emphasis on music-making over the music product: more verbi, less noun phrase. Wit and intellect are rarely wrapped in such sluggish, reverentistic beauty.” — *Tiny Mix Tapes*



Royal Bangs
We Breed Champions
 AER 5



From Knoxville, Tennessee, here is a new band to make y’all nod and wiggle. This is their first album on a major (sic) label, and they are very excited about the prospect of soon becoming “main” “indigenous” and brutally catchy.” — Knoxville Voice



Miss Murgatroid / Petra Haden
Hearts & Daggers
 FUM 3



Miss Murgatroid and Petra Haden (Decemberists, That Dog) converse anew for another bout of ebullient sonic symbiosis. Layering vocals, violin, viola, and accordion in ways that will utterly enchant and intrigue the listener, this true labor of love defies as many genres as it is influenced by.

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Feast your ears upon *The Delicious'* complex, light-hearted, and trackishly disjointed blend of experimental indie-art-pop. *Postcard To My Sewing Circle* abounds with elegantly constructed, cerebral power-pop anthems.



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“The guitar and violin that echo Robert Fripp and David Cross sparring in mid-’70s *King Crimson* also sounds like you’re lending off 10 pirates at a crowded bar and slicing out their tongues without knocking over a single beer.” — *Pitchfork*



Shot X Shot
Let Nature Square
 HGH 19



“All [tracks] leave an impression, upon completion, of being neither solipsistic nor beholden to cliché—a small miracle, these days. This calmly assured debut bodes well for the future of all involved.” — *The Wire*



Steinski
What Does It All Mean? 1983-2006 Retrospective
 ILL 116

illegal art

Hip-hop sampling legend *Steinski's* first ever definitive release, including monumental mixes and collaborations from 1983-2006. DJ Shadow heralded *Double Dee & Steinski* as “one of my biggest influences: my life was changed forever.”



Shame Club
Come On
 SSO 80



Hard hitting, honest American rock n’ roll that purrs like the engine of a lovingly restored muscle car and kicks as much ass as a fleet of ‘em. Any better and it would come with an ice-cold six-pack.

MUSIC OUT ON A LIMB.

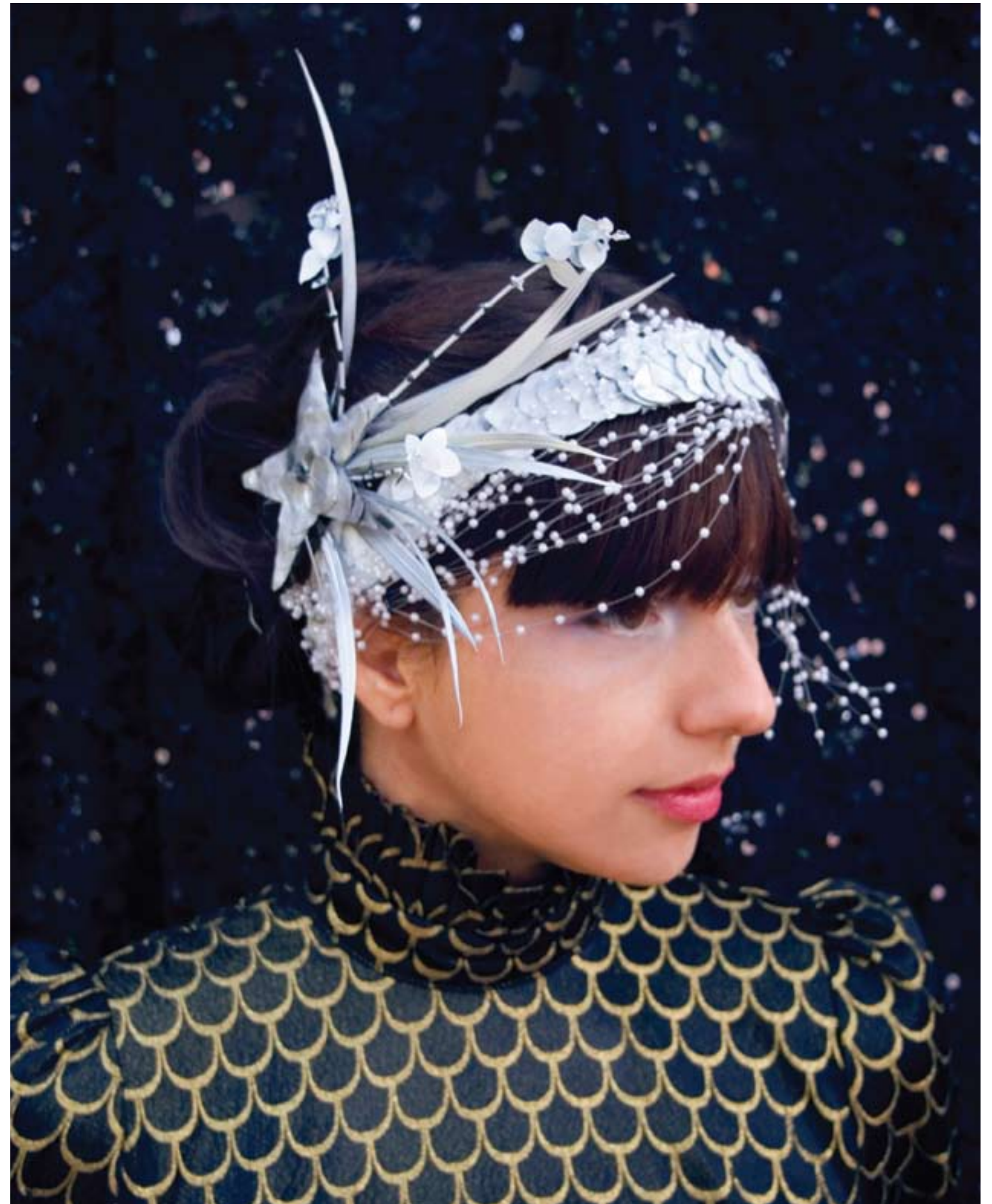
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Bandstand



by alia penner





The Entrance Band, Piz wears Young Edwardian by Elizabeth Brando & headress by Pretty Tippy.
Guy wears vests & pants by Mr. Hodgespodge. Derek wears jacket by South Paradise Leather.



WEEDEATER
BY NANCE KLEHM

Invite the Wild neighbors to dinner

Charismatic mega-fauna are really taking it on the chin these days. They look great on posters and t-shirts, but don't let them walk untethered through town!

I was quite upset when, in April, a mountain lion showed up in Chicago, and was shot seven times by the police. I too have always felt a bit conspicuous and unwieldy in the city.

This cougar traveled hundreds of miles to get to Chicago. Perhaps it knocked out a few slow squirrels or stray cats when it touched on the interminable sprawl of Chicago, or Milwaukee, or even Rockford, Illinois, but there were no human attacks. Of course, there could have been—but there wasn't.

Last year, also in Chicago, a coyote showed up in the refrigerated beverage section of a downtown sandwich shop. After 45 minutes, and after several people-customers took pictures of it with their cell phones, animal control showed up. The coyote was given an overnight stay at a suburban wildlife rehabilitation center and released—probably back into the suburbs.

Most people around here are asking why these animals show up in huge metropolises. I think a better question to ask is this: Don't you ever feel like one of these animals?

Mountain lions are both protectors and nurturers. They are loners and independent types. They stand for something quite formidable. Heck, they're lions! It doesn't seem like city folk are ready to live with such animals. Most have fear rather than respect for them. Lots of fear. Some reasonable. Some not so much.

So, if you feel like you're a big cat in the big city, how do you protect yourself from being shot? Perhaps it would be better to adapt the strategy of a weed.

Weeds are plants that were once valued and cultivated but now have escaped cultivation. Some have been further domesticated into a more mild form now recognized as food. For instance, our lettuces are domesticated variations of wild lettuce.

Weeds are really good at hiding in the open. Their secrets are kept close in their invisibility. Their numbers are always spreading.

Be a weed:

Thrive no matter where you are

Make your own food and oxygen

Make soils better for the next inhabitants

Send out a gazillion seeds

Reincarnate frequently in unexpected places



illustration by Makeswell

I want to introduce you to mugwort—Ms. *Artemisia vulgaris*. She is widespread in the United States. Mugwort pops up in both our urban and rural settings. She is downright plentiful and ready for you to use. (*Note: if pregnant, please do not use this herb. Read more about it first.*)

Artemis, the Queen of the Beasts, was a wild one. She was an extreme hunter and friend of forest beasts. Artemis found mugwort and delivered it to the centaur. Forever after, it has carried her name.

“...if you feel like you're a big cat in the big city, how do you protect yourself from being shot? Perhaps it would be better to adapt the strategy of a weed.”

I recommend you look for *Artemisia vulgaris*. And when you find her, gently trim a piece and dry it, then simply burn it in a saucer and inhale the smoke. This plant is a protector from evil as well as an aide to communication with the plant world.

Native Americans, Asians, and Europeans have used this plant medicinally and as a healthful culinary herb for hundreds of years. In Europe it was used as the main bittering flavor for ales until cultivated hops took over. My friend, Tree, just shared some of his herby mugwort ale with me while we munched on some homemade cheese. Sweet. Mugwort is used in moxibustion. In acupuncture, this is the smoking punk they hover over your acupuncture points. It

draws blood to the skin's surface and unblocks your body's meridian points of stuck energies.

Fresh or dried mugwort also repels insects, cleanses your blood of toxins, promotes sweating, and reduces tension. Lastly, you should know it has some of the same properties of its mysterious cousin of a different species (any guesses?).

Mugwort is also used for lucid dreaming. Cut a spring and put it under your pillow or tuck a sprig into your pocket for protection. Burn some before you settle into an evening outside. Smoke some before you go foraging or before you lie down in a meadow for a nap.

Maybe it is time we invite these charismatic mega-fauna and not-so-charismatic weeds to the table. Set a place for them. I am not talking about putting them on the menu at some upscale restaurant so we can create a demand. I am simply proposing we let them walk through town. They can take up shelter under our porches or feed off the extra bunnies.

Speaking of weeds, please do serve them up, drink them, smoke them, learn about them and love them. Find an overarching but examined respect for them. You should, because the mega-fauna and weeds are already here or on their way.

While riding my bicycle by the train line recently, I saw the ghost image of the big cat out of the corner of my eye. It emerged from the alley and then ducked back in. In other words, the cat's spirit hasn't left.

Nance Klehm is a radical ecologist, system designer, urban forager, teacher, artist and mad scientist of the living. She has worked in Australia, England, Scandinavia, the Caribbean and various places in the United States and Mexico. She is a promoter of direct participatory experiences.



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